

REMARKS

Applicant is grateful for the courtesy shown to the undersigned by Examiner Johnson during a phone interview on July 14, 2004. Applicant sought the Examiner's opinion as to alternate wording that would avoid confusion with the broad interpretation of the term "embed" in the rejection. After reviewing the case and the cited art, the terms "pierce" or "penetrate" were considered to be more descriptive. The Examiner indicated that, with amendment to the more descriptive term, the claims would be allowable, subject to the results of an updated search.

Claims 10 and 20 have been amended to recite that, in Applicant's actuation lever assembly, the lever comprises a sharply pointed tip that pierces the inner peripheral surface of the pocket, as described at page 4, lines 27-29, and discussed with the Examiner. Claims 10 and 20 have also been amended to clarify that the first end of the lever is received in the pocket of the knob, as shown in the Figures. Claim 20 is amended to point out that the tip is sharply pointed. Claims 12 and 20 have been amended to more clearly point out that the first portion of the retaining member extends inward and the second portion of the retaining member extends outward, thereby clarifying the wording.

It is respectfully requested that the amendments be entered. In the event that the claims are still deemed unpatentable over the art, it is requested that the amendments be entered nevertheless, if only for purpose of avoiding confusion as to the term "embed" and so clarifying issues for appeal.

Claim Rejection under 35 USC § 103

Claims 10-14 and 17-20 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103 as unpatentable over Japanese patent document JP-3-246114, by Shirogane, published in 1991.

Referring to figures 1 and 3, the Shirogane document shows an assembly that includes a knob 3 attached to a lever 1. The knob includes a recess having a groove 24 in the inner surface. The lever end is inserted into the recess and includes a protrusion 13 that is received in the groove. As clearly shown, protrusion 10 has a blunt tip that is stopped against the groove surface. In contrast, Applicant's lever includes a sharp tip to pierce or penetrate the surface of the knob pocket to secure the knob to the lever. Shirogane uses a blunt tip to provide a physical stop, and would not require or even desire to penetrate the surface, which would produce axial clearance and a loose axial fit, i.e., a loose knob. Moreover, the practitioner would perceive that Shirogane contemplates a lever formed of molded synthetic resin, since the complex configuration is suited for plastic molding, but not for mass production metal-forming processes, and also because the diode leads 10 would be shorted by a metal lever. The practitioner would also perceive that plastic molding is not adapted to form a sharp tip to penetrate suitable knob materials. Thus, Shirogane would not suggest a sharp tip to the skilled practitioner, and so does not point to Applicant's invention.

Claim 10 is directed to Applicant's actuation lever assembly that includes, as main elements, a knob and a lever. The lever has a first end that is received in a pocket of the

knob and has a sharply pointed tip that pierces the inner peripheral surface of the pocket. Shirogane shows a blunt tip that is stopped against the groove surface. Thus, Shirogane does not teach or suggest Applicant's invention in claim 10, or claims 11-14 and 17-19 dependent thereon.

Claim 20 is directed to Applicant's actuation lever assembly similar to claim 10, but with additional features preferred in the practice of Applicant's invention. As for claim 10, the assembly in claim 20 comprises a lever having an end received in the pocket of the knob and a resilient deflectable retaining member having a sharply pointed tip that pierces the inner peripheral surface of the knob pocket. Shirogane does not show a sharp tip piercing the knob surface, and so does not teach or suggest Applicant's invention as set forth in claim 20.

Accordingly, it is respectfully requested that the rejection of the claims based upon Shirogane be reconsidered and withdrawn, and that the claims be allowed.

Conclusion

It is believed, in view of the amendments and remarks herein, that all grounds of rejection of the claims have been addressed and overcome, and that all claims are in condition for allowance. If it would further prosecution of the application, the Examiner is urged to contact the undersigned at the phone number provided.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any fees associated with this communication to Deposit Account No. 50-0831.

Respectfully submitted,



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